

India's Rural Habitat in Need of Rejuvenation

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ABSTRACT

After food and clothing housing is the most important aspect of life. In rural areas due to extreme poverty the housing condition remained worst affected since time immemorial. In most of the cases the material used in the housing continued to be the locally available earthen and wooden combination for thatched shelter. Even the housing number remained far shorter than the required for millions of families. Also the size of the housing generally do not provide the basics of the privacy required in the family life. Recently deforestation has affected the rural habitat, except in those areas where stones and rock slabs are easily available. Taped water, latrine and electricity among rural households is a rare phenomenon. In absence of any major innovation for affordable and durable material of housing the future of rural habitat seems to be bleak.

1. INTRODUCTION

In India the rapid rate of population growth with more than one-third population living below poverty line side-tracks the planners to seriously undertake within the given budget the next most important requirement of humanity, i.e., housing. The result is that India has worst condition of housing among the third-world countries. The size of the household varies from one state to another and accordingly the size of dwelling is required. The average size of household in rural India is 5.58 (Total Rural+Urban = 5.52), when the lowest average is in Chandigarh, i.e. 4.38.

In India as a whole only 30.96 per cent rural households occupy pucca houses. According to the definition of 'Census of India (1991)'¹ a pucca house is one of which the predominant material of wall and roof are as given below :

Wall : Burnt bricks, GI sheets, or other metal sheets, stone, Cement, concrete, etc.

Roof : Tiles, slate, corrugated iron, zinc or other metal or asbestos cement sheet, bricks, limestone, RRC/RCC, etc.

1. Census of India, 1991, Houses and Household Amenities, Series I, Part VII.

Housing is important for development in both economic and welfare terms.² After food, housing is typically the largest item of household expenditure for poor families, and that they are willing to go to great lengths to obtain housing at locations with access to employment, even if this means incurring the risks of illegal 'squatting.'³ In India due to an explosive increase in population, low income levels, low rate of addition to the housing stock, inadequate maintenance of the existing housing stock, etc. the housing problem has been assuming more and more alarming proportions.

For example the households coming under highest the monthly per capita expenditure class of Rs.385 and above have no katcha dwellings and only less than 10 per cent dwellings are semi-pucca. Whereas the households with least monthly per capita expenditure class of less than Rs.65 have about 70 per cent katcha dwellings and have no pucca dwelling in rural areas. Similarly the per capita covered area in sq. m. is highest among the highest monthly per capita expenditure class, which is 12.2 m². When the covered area is least, i.e. 3.9 m² of least monthly per capita expenditure class.

2. World Bank, 1975, Housing : Sector Policy Paper, Washington, p.3

3. World Bank, 1975, Housing : Sector Policy Paper, Washington, p.2

2. OWNERSHIP OF RESIDENTIAL HOUSES

Table 1 shows that the ownership in advanced countries is much less like in Japan 57.8 per cent, Canada 61.8 per cent and Australia 66.7 per cent, whereas in Bangladesh and

Table 1 : Housing Situation in Few Countries

Country	Year	Average size of occupied persons per HH	Owner occupied	Average No. of rooms per household using unit	Average No. of persons per room
India	1971*	5.6	84.6	2.0	2.8
	1983**	5.6	83.0	2.2	2.7
Bangladesh	1973*	5.9	92.4	2.0	2.9
	1983**	6.1	91.0	-	-
Egypt	1976*	5.2	-	-	1.8
	1983**	5.1	-	3.5	1.4
Japan	1978*	3.5	57.8	-	-
	1983**	3.4	63.0	4.2	0.6
Israel	1978*	3.7	70.6	2.9	1.8
	1983**	3.9	72.0	2.6	1.3
Australia	1976*	3.1	66.7	5.4	0.6
	1983**	3.0	74.0	4.9	0.6
Canada	1976*	3.2	61.8	5.4	0.6
	1983**	2.4	64.0	5.6	0.6

Source : * UN Statistical Year Book, 1976, 1977 and 1978.

** International Marketing Data and Statistics, 1987-88
12th Edition, Euromonitor Publications Ltd., 1987.

India it is 92.4 and 86.2 per cent respectively which is too high. It indicates that in advanced countries housing is considered as an industry, whereas in developing countries it is still an individual's responsibility. In India also if housing is also declared as an industry, it may solve the housing problem upto a major extent, where people may go for a lease in the competitive market. In some of the states and Union Territories the proportion of ownership is much less in comparison to national average, are Chandigarh 46.0 per cent, Andaman and Nicobars 59.2 per cent, Delhi 66.1 per cent and Arunachal Pradesh 67.3 per cent. Here Chandigarh and Delhi are predominantly urban, therefore, upto certain extent industrialisation aspect of housing prevails like the overall situation of urban India, i.e. 65.6 per cent ownership. In Andaman and Nicobars and Arunachal Pradesh, situation is different, as they are the sensitive areas and government has provided the housing facility upto a large extent.

3. CONDITION OF RESIDENCE

3.1 Households by Flood Risk of Building

Table 2 shows that in India due to improper drainage system and torrential rains about 18.5 per cent rural households suffer by flood risk of their houses. In such condition houses need expensive repairing and their longevity is reduced. States/Union Territories where more than one-fifth households suffer with flood risk of their houses are

Table 2 : Rural Households by Flood Risk of Building and With No Approach Road

State/Union Territories	Percentage Dis- tribution of HH by Flood Risk of Building	Percentage Distri- bution of HH by No Approach Road to Building
Andhra Pradesh	16.3	29.1
Assam	49.0	34.5
Bihar	37.1	46.7
Gujarat	10.4	37.8
Haryana	6.9	3.7
Himachal Pradesh	10.0	71.6
Jammu & Kashmir	16.8	57.5
Karnataka	6.6	31.1
Kerala	8.8	49.8
Madhya Pradesh	5.0	48.2
Maharashtra	6.5	32.6
Manipur	27.8	40.7
Meghalaya	3.1	63.9
Nagaland	-	-
Orissa	18.1	17.7
Punjab	29.3	16.8
Rajasthan	2.8	12.1
Sikkim	0.7	76.1
Tamil Nadu	11.4	26.7
Tripura	3.3	45.1
Uttar Pradesh	23.8	42.3
West Bengal	34.7	36.0
Andaman & Nicobar	9.3	30.3
Arunachal Pradesh	6.7	53.9
Chandigarh	9.7	22.0
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	0.9	65.7
Delhi	-	3.6
Goa	-	60.2
Lakshadweep	15.7	56.6
Mizoram	1.7	53.5
Pondicherry	16.3	21.4
Daman & Diu	9.9	9.7
All India	18.5	37.5

Source : Sarvekshna, 52nd Issue, Vol.XVI, No.1, July-September, 1992, NSS - 43rd Round (Surveyed in July 1987 - June 1988).

Assam 49.0 per cent, Bihar 37.1, Manipur 27.8, Punjab 29.3, Uttar Pradesh 23.6 and West Bengal 34.7 per cent. There is no State/Union Territories where more or less houses are not affected by flood.

3.2 Households by No Approach Road

In India there are households without any approach road to their buildings. According to Table 2, in rural areas such households are 37.5 per cent. There are States/Union Territories where more than half of the households are deprived without an approach road. They are Sikkim 76.1 per cent, Dadar and Nagar Haveli 65.7, Meghalaya 63.9, Goa 60.2, Jammu and Kashmir 57.5, Lakshadweep 56.6, Arunachal Pradesh 53.9 and Mizoram 53.5 per cent.

3.3 Livings in Slum/Bustee Areas

According to NSS Table 3 in India about 6.3 per cent households of rural live in slum/bustee areas and out of which 47.0 per cent live in katcha structures.

In rural India there are States/UTs where more one-tenth households live in slum/bustee areas, i.e. Arunachal Pradesh 48.6 per cent, Pondicherry 28.9, Assam 15.0, Maharashtra 12.5, Manipur 10.6 and Mizoram 10.2. There are several reasons of slums/bustees, i.e. (i) rampant poverty; (ii) wrong housing policies/planning and no innovation for housing materials in alluvial plains.

Table 3 : Rural Households Living in Slum/Bustee Areas and Their Proportion Living in Katcha Structures

State/Union Territories	Percentage of HH living in Slum/Bustee Areas	Percentage of Slum/Bustee dwellers living in katcha structures
Andhra Pradesh	6.7	65.1
Assam	15.0	73.0
Bihar	6.8	53.3
Gujarat	4.7	15.1
Haryana	2.0	15.3
Himachal Pradesh	5.4	5.9
Jammu & Kashmir	2.2	12.2
Karnataka	7.4	41.1
Kerala	1.7	28.2
Madhya Pradesh	8.1	22.3
Maharashtra	12.5	26.7
Manipur	10.6	82.4
Meghalaya	5.0	58.1
Nagaland	-	-
Orissa	6.4	79.5
Punjab	3.5	20.8
Rajasthan	5.4	39.7
Sikkim	7.6	9.6
Tamil Nadu	6.3	62.4
Tripura	8.9	80.0
Uttar Pradesh	3.7	50.6
West Bengal	4.0	71.9
Andaman & Nicobar	1.0	-
Arunachal Pradesh	48.6	96.0
Chandigarh	N.A.	N.A.
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	5.2	23.1
Delhi	N.A.	N.A.
Goa	-	-
Lakshadweep	1.1	-
Mizoram	10.2	79.1
Pondicherry	28.9	73.1
Daman & Diu	-	-
All India	6.3	47.0

Source : Sarvekshna, 52nd Issue, Vol.XVI, No.1, July-September, 1992, NSS - 43rd Round (Surveyed in July 1987 - June 1988).

3.4 Quality of Houses

As per definition of pucca houses by the Census of India as mentioned earlier, India has 30.96 per cent rural houses as pucca.⁴ Among some of the states/UTs the situation in rural areas is worst where pucca houses are even less than 15 per cent i.e. Tripura 1.99, Manipur 4.36, Nagaland 8.39, Andaman and Nicobars 8.84, Assam 10.90, Meghalaya 12.08, Arunachal Pradesh 12.25 and Orissa 13.52. There are also few states/UTs where rural pucca houses are above 45 per cent i.e. Delhi 86.88, Lakshadweep 83.91, Punjab 72.23, Daman and Diu 71.23, Chandigarh 58.79, Kerala 51.80, Himachal Pradesh 49.88 and Rajasthan 47.28. Rural areas of Delhi and Chandigarh are almost the part of the greater metropolitan system whereas Punjab, Kerala, Lakshadweep and Daman and Diu are the most affluent states/UTs in India. Himchal Pradesh and Rajasthan states are gifted with the abundance of natural wealth of stones for pucca houses

4. SIZE OF ACCOMMODATION

4.1 Covered Area

We can get the idea of size of accommodation by Table 4, i.e., per capita covered area in square metres. In India

4. Ibid.

Table 4 : Per Capita Covered Area (M^2) by Type of Structure in Urban Areas of India

State/Union Territories	Kutcha	Semi-Pucca	Pucca	All Categories
Andhra Pradesh	13.9	56.5	39.3	32.7
Assam	13.6	15.6	26.5	14.6
Bihar	12.1	17.5	23.8	15.0
Gujarat	32.2	41.3	41.2	38.0
Haryana	6.4	10.8	14.6	12.5
Himachal Pradesh	10.1	13.3	11.0	12.1
Jammu & Kashmir	8.9	8.8	18.2	10.9
Karnataka	8.6	10.5	12.8	10.4
Kerala	6.1	8.9	14.2	10.4
Madhya Pradesh	15.5	18.7	53.2	21.0
Maharashtra	6.5	8.3	12.7	8.5
Manipur	29.5	10.6	6.4	23.1
Meghalaya	8.6	5.4	5.7	7.2
Nagaland	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Orissa	6.6	7.8	9.9	7.0
Punjab	5.0	7.1	13.7	10.4
Rajasthan	8.2	12.9	11.0	7.1
Sikkim	9.7	4.7	4.4	5.9
Tamil Nadu	4.6	6.2	8.8	6.1
Tripura	5.9	6.9	12.9	6.0
Uttar Pradesh	17.3	13.3	13.0	15.0
West Bengal	*	*	*	*
Andaman & Nicobar	6.2	6.1	15.4	7.8
Arunachal Pradesh	73.0	21.5	46.4	53.9
Chandigarh	4.7	4.8	20.6	12.7
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	5.1	4.6	12.9	5.6
Delhi	-	16.2	13.4	13.9
Goa, Daman & Diu	9.2	14.5	13.3	13.4
Lakshadweep	7.7	11.4	12.1	11.5
Mizoram	40.1	9.7	-	24.8
Pondicherry	3.4	4.4	9.7	5.2
All India	39.2	33.9	26.3	34.8

Source : Sarvekshna, 52nd Issue, Vol.XVI, No.1, July-September, 1992, NSS - 43rd Round (Surveyed in July 1987 - June 1988).

* Figures are unbelievably high, thus it could not be considered for analysis

average per capita covered area in rural areas is 34.8 m^2 . The highest average per capita covered area available in kutcha houses is 39.2 m^2 than in semi pucca 33.9 or pucca houses 26.3 in rural areas.

In rural India the largest per capita, i.e. 15 m^2 and above, covered area of kutcha houses are in Arunachal Pradesh 73 , Mizoram 40.1 , Gujarat 32.2 , Manipur 29.5 , Uttar Pradesh 17.3 and Madhya Pradesh 15.5 m^2 . Per capita large covered area of semi-pucca houses are in Andhra Pradesh 56.5 , Gujarat 41.3 , Arunachal Pradesh 21.5 , Madhya Pradesh 18.7 , Bihar 17.5 , Delhi 16.2 and Assam 15.6 m^2 . Highest per capita covered area of pucca houses in rural areas are in Madhya Pradesh 53.2 , Arunachal Pradesh 46.3 , Gujarat 41.2 , Andhra Pradesh 39.3 , Assam 26.5 , Bihar 23.8 , Chandigarh 20.6 , Jammu and Kashmir 18.2 and Andaman and Nicobar 15.4 .

4.2 Room Occupancy

In India the majority of rural households occupy the minimum size of accommodation. About 40.8 per cent households live in one room houses, 30.7 per cent in two room houses, 13.5 per cent in three room houses and 6.9 per cent in four room houses and rest with unspecified room houses. Among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes the situation is worst as 48.1 per cent Scheduled Castes, 51.2 per cent Scheduled Tribes live in one room houses, 31.0 per cent Scheduled Castes, 30.1 per cent Scheduled Tribes in two

rooms, 10.8 per cent Scheduled Castes, 10.3 per cent Scheduled Tribes in three room houses, 4.7 per cent SC, 3.8 per cent ST in four room houses. The following Table 5 shows that the situation among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is worst in comparison to other households.

Table 5 : Percentage of Rural Households
Occupying Rooms in India

	One Room	Two Rooms	Three Rooms	Four Rooms
Overall	40.8	30.7	13.5	6.9
Scheduled Castes	48.1	31.0	10.8	4.7
Scheduled Tribes	51.3	30.8	10.3	3.8

Source : Calculated from Table on Houses and Household Amenities, Census of India, Series I, Part VII, 1991.

The worst condition of rural living is observed in five states/UTs where one room occupying households are more than 50 per cent, e.g. Tripura 68.6, Maharashtra 65.7, West Bengal 59.4, Pondicherry 54.0 and Tamil Nadu 57.9 per cent. Their details are given in Table 6.

Among the well-off States/UTs which have less than 25 per cent rural households living in one room tenement are Laksha-dweep 8.0, Kerala 12.7, Manipur 17.7 and Nagaland 20.1. More than 65 per cent rural Scheduled Castes households occupying one room tenement are in Chandigarh R.81.0, Tamil Nadu R.69.6, Maharashtra R.69.6 and U.65.6,

Pondicherry U.67.7 and West Bengal R.65.8 per cent. Among the rural Scheduled Tribes household occupying one room by more than 65 per cent households are in Goa R.88.5, Tripura R.79.4 and U.72.7, Tamil Nadu R.76.2, Maharashtra R.74.8, Andaman and Nicobars R.68.8, Guajarat R.66.6, Daman and Diu R.66.3, West Bengal R.65.6 and Andhra Pradesh R.65.3 per cent.

Table 6 : Percentage of Rural Households Occupying Rooms in States/Union Territories

State/UTs	One Room	Two Rooms	Three Rooms	Four Rooms
<u>Worst Condition of Living</u>				
Tripura	68.6	21.9	6.3	1.9
Maharashtra	65.7	20.8	5.1	1.5
West Bengal	59.4	26.3	7.1	4.5
Tamil Nadu	57.9	28.8	8.2	3.1
Pondicherry	54.0	25.5	6.1	1.9
<u>Good Condition of Living</u>				
Lakshadweep	8.0	24.9	29.8	21.3
Kerala	12.7	27.7	24.5	16.0
Manipur	17.7	32.3	28.0	13.5
Nagaland	20.1	40.3	23.2	10.0

Source : Calculated from Table on Houses and Household Amenities, Census of India, Series I, Part VII, 1991.

Comparatively least concentration of rural Scheduled Castes in one room tenaments is in Arunachal Pradesh R.17.4, Manipur 20.3 and Kerala 26.3 per cent. Among rural S.T.

concentrations in one room set is least in Manipur 22.0, Nagaland 20.1, Sikkim 24.8, and Lakshadweep 7.8 per cent.

5. HOUSING REQUIREMENT

India has only 30.96 per cent pucca houses in rural areas and majority of the households live in one room accommodation. But we can't think for the improvement of quality as yet as we already have acute shortage of houses in

Table 7 : Acute Rural Housing Shortage, 1991

State/Union Territories	No. of Houses	Percentage
Pondicherry	6085	11.09
Arunachal Pradesh	14995	11.09
Bihar	1038876	9.33
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	1176	5.21
Orissa	334192	6.91
Daman & Diu	585	6.33
Uttar Pradesh	680382	3.92
Goa	6277	4.85
Haryana	60152	3.30
Delhi	1577	0.10

Source : Calculated from Table on Houses and Household Amenities, Census of India, Series I, Part VII, 1991.

the country which needs priority.⁵ The shortage of houses in rural areas is about 3.65 million or 3.38 per cent. The above Table 7 shows the acute shortage of houses in different states and Union Territories.

However, there are major states which somehow do not emerge in terms of percentage for house shortage where house shortage is above one lakh, Andhra Pradesh 322,963, Maharashtra 299,855, Madhya Pradesh 282,161, West Bengal 135,575 and Karnataka 126,399.

6. HOUSING RELATED FACILITIES

Basic housing related facilities like drinking water, toilet and electricity are the most essential requirements for today's rural India.

6.1 Drinking Water Facility

In India rural households with drinking water generally with pipe tap within the premises are 23.2 per cent in rural areas. In rural India drinking water within the premises of SC and ST are 15.6 per cent and 10.8 per cent respectively. Table 8 shows the State/UTs-wise rural households with water facility within their premises. Among the states/UTs, four are on the top where more than 65 per cent rural households

5 According to NSS 44th Round (July 88-June 1989), Report No.376 in rural India the percentage of bad condition of dwellings are in pucca 4.08, Semi pucca 13.42 and kutcha 41.88.

have drinking water facility within their premises, they are Lakshadweep 92.5, Punjab 78.3, Delhi 68.3 and Kerala 65.8 per cent. The worst served states/UTs are Mizoram, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Daman and Diu, where less than 15 per cent rural households are provided drinking water within their premises. Among the down-trodden, i.e. SC and ST the availability of drinking water within the premises is least in comparison to overall population.

Table 8 : Percentage of Rural Households with Drinking Water Within the Premises

State/UTs	Total	State/UTs	S.C.	State/UTs	S.T.
<u>Highest</u>	60>%		40>%		30>%
Lakshadweep	92.5	Punjab	69.4	Lakshadweep	92.7
Punjab	78.3	Delhi	55.1	Sikkim	56.2
Delhi	68.3	Kerala	47.0	Kerala	46.4
Kerala	65.8	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	47.0	Assam	34.8
		Sikkim	42.1	U.P.	31.8
				Goa	30.8
<u>Lowest</u>	<15%		<10%		<10%
Mizoram	4.2	Karnataka	3.1	A.P.	3.5
Tamil Nadu	9.7	Mizoram	4.1	Mizoram	4.2
Karnataka	10.3	Pondicherry	5.7	Tamil Nadu	4.3
Rajasthan	12.5	A.P.	6.5	Rajasthan	4.4
M.P.	13.2	M.P.	7.9	Bihar	6.2
A.P.	14.0	Rajasthan	8.9	Karnataka	6.2
Orissa	14.4	Orissa	9.5	Orissa	6.8
Daman & Diu	14.5			West Bengal	7.5
				Daman & Diu	7.6
				M.P.	8.7

Source : Calculated from Table on Houses and Household Amenities, Census of India, Series I, Part VII, 1991.

The above analysis reveals that more than tow-thirds rural households do not have drinking water facility within their premises and they have to waste a lot of time to fetch water from even far-off places. In our study we found that the time duration for fetching water from different sources was between 2 to 4 hours. Its answer is not only in mismanagement of water supply but also drying the water sources due to ineffective environmental policies.

6.2 Toilet

Toilet is one of the most important aspect of housing. In India only 11.4 per cent rural households avail toilet

Table 9: Percentage of Rural Households with Toilet Facility

State/UTs	Total	State/UTs	S.C.	State/UTs	S.T.
<u>Highest</u>	40>%		30>%		30>%
Lakshadweep	81.7	Tripura	73.0	Lakshadweep	81.8
Tripura	63.1	Mizoram	53.3	Mizoram	60.2
Mizoram	60.7	Arunachal P.	46.4	Arunachal P.	41.2
Kerala	46.0	Meghalaya	32.4	Tripura	36.5
Arunachal P.	41.9	Manipur	32.1	Sikkim	31.2
<u>Lowest</u>	< 5%		< 2%		< 2%
M.P.	3.7	Chandigarh	1.8	Goa	0.5
Orissa	4.0	M.P.	1.9	Orissa	0.7
Chandigarh	4.7	Orissa	1.9	Rajasthan	0.9
				M.P.	1.0
				Bihar	1.0
				A.P.	1.4

Source : Calculated from Table on Houses and Household Amenities, Census of India, Series I, Part VII, 1991.

facility within their premises. In fact in rural areas it is a part of tradition and culture that people prefer to defecate in their fields from hygienic and environmental point of view. But it becomes a great problem when they defecate on road and railway sides and make the area polluted. Table 9 shows the sharp contrast in various states/UTs.

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The states/UTs where more than 40 per cent rural households use their toilets at home are Lakshadweep 81.7, Tripura 63.1, Mizoram 60.7, Kerala 46.0 and Arunachal Pradesh 41.9. In fact among all these states the impact of westernisation through Christian Missionaries is an important factor and among the SC and ST population, the impact is quite high. The lowest i.e. less than 5 per cent households using their toilets in rural areas are in Madhya Pradesh 3.7, Orissa 4.0 and Chandigarh 4.7. States/UTs where less than 2 per cent SC households use their toilets are Chandigarh 1.8, M.P. 1.9 and Orissa 1.9, whereas ST households are in Goa 0.5, Orissa 0.7, Rajasthan 0.9, M.P. 1.0, Bihar 1.0 and Andhra Pradesh 1.4. All the above states/UTs have least impact of Christian Missionaries (See Table 9).

6.3 Electricity

Electricity is one of the most important facility in the households and no house without electricity is now considered complete. Besides lighting, our day to day activities of the

family depend upon electricity. Our country is bigger in size as well as in population but the sources and production of electricity are limited and the result is that in India only 45.7 per cent households are provided with electricity. In rural and urban areas the gap is too much as only 33.1 per cent rural households are with electricity (when 70 per cent India's population lives in rural areas. There is an extreme regional variation throughout the country, which also correlates with the poverty and affluence, reflecting the socio-economic and cultural status of the society. Here it is worth to mention that it is not necessary that the

Table 10: Percentage of Rural Households with Electricity

State/UTs	Total	State/UTs	S.C.	State/UTs	S.T.
<u>Highest</u>	60%>		60%>		50%>
Lakshadweep	98.6	Daman & Diu	96.9	Lakshadweep	98.9
Daman & Diu	93.9	Himachal P.	82.7	Daman & Diu	83.0
Himachal P.	87.5	Dadar & Nagar		Himachal P.	72.5
Goa	63.3	Haveli	81.8	Sikkim	66.5
Punjab	79.7	Goa	74.9	Nagaland	50.7
Chandigarh	68.9	Punjab	66.4	Andaman & Nic.	50.3
Haryana	66.7	Gujarat	61.2		
Delhi	64.6	Delhi	60.6		
<u>Lowest</u>	<20%		<20%		<10%
Bihar	6.2	Bihar	4.3	Goa	1.3
U.P.	12.6	U.P.	7.1	Bihar	3.0
Assam	13.0	Assam	11.9	Assam	6.0
West Bengal	18.4	West Bengal	13.0	Orissa	6.1
Meghalaya	18.4	Orissa	13.1	Rajasthan	8.2
		Rajasthan	16.7	West Bengal	8.6

Source : Calculated from Table on Houses and Household Amenities, Census of India, Series I, Part VII, 1991.

households with electric connections are enjoying the continuous electric supply. The shortage of electricity is the main hurdle for India's uniform regional development.

The above Table 10 reveals that except the states of Punjab and Haryana none of the populous states come under the highest 90% categories rather they fall in the lowest <70% categories or in between. In India the general feature is that the proportion of households enjoying the electricity (in terms of connection and supply) is according to the hierarchy of settlements. Therefore, the households in metropolitan cities enjoy maximum than the other smaller towns or villages where proportion goes down to even nil. Scheduled Tribes are comparatively well off in all those States/UTs where they are dominant in number and they have their own government. In other states/UTs where they live as a minority, they fall under the least category. Scheduled Castes who are generally dispersed through out the country than the STs, are better off than STs.

7. CONCLUSION

India being the seventh in area and second largest populated country of the world faces an acute shortage and worst condition of housing. About 18.5 per cent rural households suffer with flood risk of their buildings. In rural India about 37.5 per cent households do not have any

approach road to their buildings. About 6.3 per cent rural households live in slum/bustee areas, when these figures are far below than the truth. In rural areas average size-wise per capita kutcha, semi-pucca and pucca structures are 39.2, 33.9 and 26.3 square metres respectively. About 40.8 per cent rural households live in one room set, whereas 48.14 per cent Scheduled Castes and 51.27 per cent Scheduled Tribes household live in one room set. Only 6.9 per cent households live in four rooms set when only 4.7 per cent and 3.8 per cent households of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes live in four rooms set respectively. Worst states are Tripura, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu where more than 50 per cent rural households live in one room set. In rural India about 3,700,000 houses are urgently required for houseless households who are compelled to huddle with others. The quality of living is yet to be the next priority that about 70 per cent rural houses are either kutcha or semi-pucca, whereas a little less than half of the humanity clogs in one room set.

In rural India only 32.2 per cent urban households have tapped water within their premises. Only 11.4 per cent rural houses have toilet facility within the premises. Only about 33.1 per cent of rural households have an electricity connection. On an average only half of the time electric power is available for agriculture, industrial or domestic purposes, which is due to short sighted planning that also on paper only.

Even after half a century of Independence and yet prevailing almost inhuman habitat situation the question is 'can Indian society would ever be able to equate socially or economically with the other advanced societies of the world?' Unless the entire outlook, policies and planning towards human habitat is not changed we can't expect anything good in the existing system. Since geographical, social and economic conditions of the country are unique, therefore, new innovations for viable housing material is inevitable. Housing has to be declared as industry and government's role should be limited to sight and services rather than allowing its greedy authorities to undertake spurious housing construction.